

Name: Mark Risisky  
Title: Decoding the Homestead Strike  
Subject: US History  
State: Florida

The lesson plan begins with a collaborative group decoding a transcribed telegram between Henry Clay Frick and Andrew Carnegie, after which the students answer a few questions, and ends with groups collaborating with each other to assemble a history of the Homestead Strike through the documents now decoded.

Unit goals: The student will better understand the need for industrial secrecy in an age of industrial espionage; the relationship between Frick and Carnegie; the events related to the Homestead Steel Strike

Connections to state standards:

SS.912.A.3.2 Examine the social, political, and economic causes, course, and consequences of the second Industrial Revolution that began in the late 19th century.

SS.912.A.3.4 Determine how the development of steel, oil, transportation, communication, and business practices affected the United States economy.

SS.912.A.3.9 Examine causes, course, and consequences of the labor movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

One-day lesson plan:

- Students will be divided into collaborative groups.
- Each will be assigned a coded telegram between Henry Clay Frick and Andrew Carnegie from July 1892. Each group will also have a list of words useful to the decryption of the telegrams,
- Students will use the decoding book to decode the telegram.
- Students will answer the following questions (as well as others of the teacher choice)
- Why do you think Frick and Carnegie encoded this telegram?
- What do you think was happening at the time of the telegram? Students will quickly present their findings to the class.
- Then, the groups will collaborate, using the telegrams, to piece together a narrative of what actually happened.
- Assessment: Informal checks for understanding; upcoming quiz or test on the unit

Technological needs: None, really

Materials needed: copies of telegrams; decoding book